- In respect of old outstanding dues relating to period up to 31.3.2006 separate targets were set, old outstanding dues of Rs. 1120.80 crores, were reduced by Rs. 222.20 crores to Rs. 898.59 crores. Also, private recovery agents were employed for making recoveries and were able to make some recoveries of about Rs. 5 crores.

- A Revenue Assurance Programme has also been implemented in MTNL wherein efforts are being made to ensure that maximum revenue Billing and Revenue Realization takes place to further reduce the outstanding dues.

- Convergent Billing System is being introduced for achieving further control on realization of outstanding.

- Automated telephonic reminders to subscribers who default in making payments of their bills.

- Further action of disconnection of the telephone including disconnection of other working connection of the subscribers is also initiated in case payment is not received.

- Legal notices are also served to those subscribers who despite the reminders fail to make the payments of the telephone bills.

- In the events of the above efforts not yielding results, recovery suits are filed in the court of law wherever possible.

Availability of spectrum

467. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in all the twenty three telecom circles, there is no cap on the service providers;

(b) if so, the number of average service providers in each circle;

(c) whether it is also a fact that one of the reasons for bad services in a circle is more number of service providers and less availability of spectrum;

(d) if so, whether the issue has been referred to TRAI; and

(e) if so, the recommendations made by TRAI in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are 5-8 Telecom Access service providers in each telecom service area.

(c) Increase in number of service providers for wireless and wire line access telecom services has significantly increased the demand on the limited spectrum resource for wireless access.

According to these Service Providers, shortage of spectrum is a key factor for degradation to performance and quality of service for wireless access.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) TRAI has not submitted its recommendation.

Post offices functioning in rented buildings

468. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme to allot fund for constructing building for post offices in the land lying vacant under the respective authority;

(b) if so, the details including the fund earmarked for the above and the number of post offices functioning in rented buildings for the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;, and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An amount of rupees 49.15 crores was spent on 'Construction of Post Offices' during the 10th Five Year Plan. An amount of rupees 15.55 crores has been earmarked for the year 2007-08 for construction of post offices.

The information regarding number of post offices functioning in rented buildings for the last five years, year-wise and State-wise is being collected from the field units and will be laid on the Table of the House

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Formulation of national sports policy

469. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL : Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate any sports policy at national level on the lines of China and Japan;

(b) whether Government have taken any steps to ascertain reasons for, poor performance of India in Sports at international level; and

(c) whether Sports Authority of India (SAI) is responsible for the poor performance of India to some extent?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The Ministry has formulated a draft comprehensive National Sports Policy and posted it on its Website on 26 July, 2007. The draft will be finalized after consultation with all major stakeholders. The draft policy takes into account the best international practices for the comprehensive development of sports, keeping our requirements in mind.

(b) While it is a fact that there is considerable room for improvement on the standard of sports in the country, the fact is that the performance of Indian